The COMMONWEAL

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Contented Guernsey

A LITTLE while ago we had a talk with a university professor who during the German occupation of France had been quite an important, quite an active member of the underground resistance to that occupation. He told us very quietly about the fierce fighting that had taken place in many parts of France, about the cruel reprisals, the hostages. All this he viewed, reasonably, as a war fought by the underground against the Germans—a great many of these terrible things he thought were in the logic of a war. What he could not forgive were the German mistakes, the casual German cruelties, and notably Oradour, the German acts against French men, women and children who were not of the underground and who were not fighting a relentless war against the occupying forces. He had a scientific inclination to establish clear formulae. He said: "Wherever there was an incident, wherever a Frenchman attacked a German, wherever a German attacked a Frenchman, a pattern of incident and repression was formed and from that moment there was an inevitable progression in violence. Things always grew worse; things never grew better. Where for one reason or another there was not the initial incident of violence, the situation would remain calm. If there had not been so many Frenchmen who refused to admit defeat and who continued to fight the Germans, the German occupation of France might have been tranquil; if the French had felt themselves utterly powerless there would have been resigned tranquillity. That is to say in theory, because the Germans would have made their mistakes anyway, they would have burned some Oradour or another, with the women burning in the burning church and only one child escaping."

Jurat (Magistrate) Leale, of Guernsey in the Channel Islands, seems most clearly to have been aware of this fundamental law which governs the relationship between an occupying force and the population subjected to its rule. He was aware of it, and acted accordingly. Herbert L. Matthews, writing from London to the New York *Times* (July 12), says that the British are only just beginning to hear about Jurat Leale and that they are considerably disturbed by a scientific attitude which they consider far too close to what customarily is called collaborationism. Jurat Leale was president of a special commission which represented the state of Guernsey (25 sq. m.) during the German occupation of the island. He could not end, he decided, that occupation by any amount of heroism; consequently he deplored "histrionic attitudes." So, apparently, did the Guernsey population: "The behavior of the people has, except for a few isolated instances, been seemly, sensible, realistic and in harmony with the rules of international law. Ours has been an occupation in which neither side went to spectacular extremes. When one hears in other places of war criminals and Quislings and the Gestapo as being its chief actors, one rather heaves a sigh of relief that ours wasn't that sort of an occupation." No Oradours; deportations, it is true, but held to a minimum, and arranged in collaboration with Jurat Leale's commission. Things were tranquil; they also served a noble purpose: "I say unblushingly that I never held the opinion that it didn't matter a scrap what the Germans thought about us. . . . I always remembered that some day the war would be over and a relationship other than war would have to be established between our own country and Germany. I could not see any advantage, either future or immediate, in the Germans who were here harboring unkind thoughts about us. . . . I like to feel that those who came here with a respect for the nation to which we belong found no reason to lose that respect, and those who came with their hearts full of hatred for us had cause to think again. . . . We, and we alone of the Britishers, can from personal experience speak of the time when German soldiers lived

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among us. This may well give us the right to be heard when the future relations between our own country and the Reich come to be determined. . . . We kept our heads while the Germans were with us. We must keep them if we are questioned about their treatment of us."

Contented Guernsey! We doubt whether anything its inhabitants may care to recall of the past seasons will, or should, have the slightest effect on the decisions as to Germany's future. (It is also a question as to what effect on Germany's future any "decisions" now being taken will have.) Our interest in that which Mr. Matthews calls an "extraordinary historic document"—Jurat Leale's speech—is twofold. In the first place, it is an interesting application of our French friend's scientific law of the "initial incident." Secondly, it forces the British, and by extension ourselves, to go a little further into the definition of what is a collaborationist and to wonder if collaborationists are necessarily traitors, weak minded, venal—and always foreigners.

Donna Rachele

"'WE were happiest in the old days,' she said, 'we never really had a home after 1925. We were happy before that. We should have gone to America when we first got married. We planned to do it and talked much about it. We planned to live there and raise children there.'" That is the widow Mussolini talking to Ann Stringer of the UP.

Once in Foggia, Italy, we were in the same hotel with another widow. There were political police sitting all over the lobby. We did not talk to that widow. She was the widow Matteotti.

There are always the widows. Some with a pride in their dead husbands which all the world would acknowledge, some without that pride, but most of them with devotion. "'Mussolini was a very intelligent man,' she said. . . . She turned, started walking again, wheeled and shouted louder. 'And tell them I said so!'"

Very Italian, that choice of the word "intelligent." Mussolini, the young radical, with his books, and his wife admiring him, no matter what he said, because he had things in the papers. And this too, very Italian and very human: "'He really trusted me. He was very sincere. He had a lot of affection for me. Probably I am the only woman who really thought something of him. I was the only woman he ever thought anything of. He really did like his family—to an extent that no other man in the world could.'" She had been talking about the Petacci, cursing the Petacci; that had been hard, but it really did not matter now that it was all over; it had been the children that had mattered: Bruno, Vittorio (what did she care what they had said about the bombs flowering over Ethiopia) and even Edda who lived in such a different world, who had gone so far away (the adjective again: "'She is a very intelligent woman'") and it had been the home, more than anything else, that had mattered. Only, there had been no real home since they had come to Rome, since "'his friends persuaded him to betray the workers.'" She did not know how he had betrayed the workers. That is only what she had heard. What she knew was that he had betrayed the idea that she had of a home. A home had to be in the village. There was no possible home in the Villa Torlonia.

Or else (there are so many poor people among the Italians) there could be a home in America. America was the place where Italians could make a home when it was too impossible to make a home in Italy.

So that he might have gone to America and then there would have been a home—with a certain amount of homesickness—but with the children working for dollars and with Mussolini perhaps running a union, but with no one urging him to any march on any Washington.

"Greatest Single Act of Statesmanship"

THE ACTION of Representative Joseph W. Martin, Jr., Republican leader in the House, calling for universal abolition of peacetime compulsory military training, is reported as a surprise to his colleagues. It is a surprise not only to his colleagues but to everyone. That a mere member of Congress should introduce a resolution like Mr. Martin's would surprise no one, for members of Congress will do almost anything if they think thereby to please some group of voters. But Mr. Martin is in a different category. He is the leader of his party. Perhaps his resolution will not even be passed in the House; if it is passed, perhaps that will be the last we hear of it. But it is so fundamentally right that we reprint it herewith, if only for the sake of the record.

> Whereas the first concern of every American is the security of the nation; and
> Whereas the American people are determined that their Government shall henceforth make proper provision for the continuous maintenance of such security; and
> Whereas, in accordance with this firm determination, it has become necessary to consider a system of compulsory military service in the United States as a permanent part of our insurance against unpreparedness in the event of sudden war; and
> Whereas compulsory military service would result in greater restrictions over the lives and activities of our people, would impose heavy burdens on them, causing greater taxes and profound changes in their way of life; and
> Whereas compulsory miltary service has long been customary in many European states and elsewhere, but has been contrary to American tradition since the founding of our Republic; and
> Whereas compulsory military service has never prevented

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war in Europe or elsewhere, but on the contrary, causes suspicion and fears to grow between nations and inclines the rulers of men to war rather than to peace; and

Whereas the people of the United States and their leaders in all sections and parties have in good faith approved the San Francisco Charter and desire our President to take a leading part in fulfilling the great purposes for which it was formed; and

Whereas with the ultimate destruction of the military power of Germany and Japan there will never be a better time than now to secure international agreement looking to prmanent peace; and

Where as an agreement between the nations of the world to eliminate systems of compulsory military service would itself be greatly conducive to that restoration of peace which is so profoundly desired by all the plain peoples of the world, and would release their energies and resources for rebuilding their war-devastated countries; and

Whereas world-wide abolition of compulsory military service in no way precludes the maintenance of national or international military forces adequate for safe-guarding national or collective security; therefore be it

Resolved, That before the United States adopts compulsory military service, the President of the United States, the Secretary of State and the personal representative of the President on the United Nations organization, Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., be and hereby are urged to work unceasingly for an immediate international agreement whereby compulsory military service shall be wholly eliminated from the policies and practices of all nations.

Veterans and Workers

FOR A long time we have been fearful that those Americans who would like to destroy the labor movement would seek in every possible way to use returning veterans for this purpose. Events have played into their hands. For the obvious reason that strikes are news, whereas keeping on the job is not news, it has been relatively simple to build up a picture of non-support for our fighting men on the home front, with labor entirely to blame. The eloquent letter of Judge Quilici to a certain Sailor Walsh, which has by now been circulated by the million and which received its first national circulation in our pages (August 4, 1944) is still the best answer to this propaganda; it and other answers similarly conceived seem to have done a good deal to destroy the myth that labor did not do its share in the war. But there are other weapons in the arsenal of those who seek to create a rift between the working fathers and brothers of our soldiers and sailors and those soldiers and sailors themselves.

In the regulations governing required re-employment of previously employed veterans, it is laid down that an employer must give a veteran back his job even if it means the discharge of a veteran of the first World War. In other words, seniority as a principle is completely discarded for the benefit of those who have fought in the present conflict. The injustices which already have resulted from this ruling, and the many more which will undoubtedly turn up in future, are obvious. No labor union could possibly retain the respect of its rank-and-file if it acceded to such a regulation. Yet it is easy to point to the protest of organized labor against this regulation as representing deep enmity between ex-servicemen and labor. This issue is consistently being misrepresented in certain sections of the press; one can only hope that in due course the regulation will be amended either by its being declared unconstitutional or by congressional action.

Pilot on Pravda on Commonweal

THE Boston *Pilot,* July 14: "The Catholic press has nothing corresponding to the Pulitzer award for 'the best editorial of the year,' 'the best news story' and other 'bests' in the newspaper field. Perhaps some day we may. But meanwhile THE COMMONWEAL and *The Catholic World* have been singled out for distinction which means far more than any formal award. *Pravda,* the Communist organ, has called these two publications outstanding examples of 'the war-mongering Catholic press.' There isn't a Catholic editor in the country who wouldn't prize this abuse—in view of the source from which it comes—as worth more than five years of Pulitzer awards."

We can readily sympathize with the *Pilot's* viewing a criticism in *Pravda* as an accolade, yet we are perturbed at the seriousness of the whole situation, and we wonder whether this sort of wit is not better reserved for conversation between friends. For there is a terrible danger that Catholics may be jockeyed into the position of being, indeed, the leading warmongers, seeking to prepare the American people for a conflict with Soviet Russia. There is a terrible responsibility incumbent upon us to refuse being forced into this position. We are therefore profoundly saddened by the injustice of *Pravda's* attack, and our only consolation is that, since we are attacked as much from the Right as we are from the Left, we are afforded some reassurance of not being too far off the track.

A New Column

IN THIS ISSUE of THE COMMONWEAL will be found the first column of a new weekly feature, "The Labor Movement," by John C. Cort, our associate editor. As most of our readers know, Mr. Cort was one of the founders of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, an organization the purpose of which is to acquaint members of trade unions with the attitude of the Church regarding social and economic problems and to assist whenever it is appropriate any legitimate union activity. His weekly comments on labor matters are not, of course, an expression of THE COMMONWEAL'S editorial policy, although we are entirely in sympathy with his general point of view.

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The House You'll Live in

If you get a new one in the years after the war

Harry Lorin Binsse

EVERY AMERICAN will agree that somehow during the war years our living facilities have suddenly become terribly overtaxed. The need and the market for new dwellings is no matter of dry statistics in the arid publications of the housers, but is a living and vivid experience for almost all of us. And hence a great deal of hope has been placed upon this need as an absorbent for war workers and servicemen thrown into the labor market once V-J Day has come. Even more than automobiles and refrigerators and washing machines, homes are what America is eager to be able to buy or rent; every last one of us longs for the day when we no longer accept with gratitude and alacrity the first thing a real estate agent offers us—for the day when we can have some slight choice in where and how we live.

We are all of us familiar with the fairyland which has been conceived by those clever artists employed by the advertising agencies. Dining-rooms out of doors, living-rooms with cosy fireplaces and such complicated gadgetry that no one need ever get out of an armchair to do anything, kitchens in which the mere directing presence of the housewife will produce a meal, the energy she expends in producing it being so slight that she will be forced to refrain from eating anyhow in order to avoid an early grave due to extreme obesity. All sorts of large advertisers—even those who do not stand to profit in any way from such wonders—have conspired to take our minds off a relatively shabby present and project them into an entirely Hollywood future. Is it this sort of sleek, aniline-colored, chrome-plated environment in which our coming generation will be reared? To that question of all questions the answer is easy. It will not.

What are we likely to get in the way of homes after the war interlude is over and the builders again commence to build? There are a number of possibilities, and we shall most probably see very nearly all of them tried. Perhaps all of them will find enough market to keep them going; perhaps some will fall by the wayside. As to that, there is no way of knowing, for the answer depends upon an unfathomable factor—the factor of public taste. But we can with reasonable safety describe the possibilities and point to some of their economic consequences. Of course the first necessity is to supply Americans with the homes they lack; but a secondary necessity, in the long run even more important, is to arrange matters in such fashion that building contributes its full share to the national income, which must be kept high if we wish to avoid economic disaster.

It is estimated that the United States could readily absorb well over a million new dwellings a year for a considerable number of years before we reach a point where the nation is really adequately housed. I have deliberately put the figure low. Some people would call me over-conservative. Suppose that the average cost of these dwellings is $4,000. The construction of a million of them a year would constitute one of the largest single industries not now operative. And this industry would have the further advantage of supplying an outlet for non-consumption goods—an outlet which will be badly needed when the war is over. Indeed the advocates of prefabrication have looked to housing as the most hopeful means of putting to good use the vast plant we have built for the manufacture of airplanes—a plant which is more than likely to fall into wrack and ruin once the demands of war have been met. It is this hope which accounts for the flood of talk about prefabrication in recent months.

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But first of all let us get a clear idea of what this term, *prefabrication,* really means. It means several things, which fall into two main categories, and since there is no clearly accepted definition of the word, those interested are likely to slur the two meanings together for their own profit. Exactly the same thing happened a few years before the war with the term *air-conditioned.* At the outset this meant either an indoors atmosphere artificially cooled for comfort in hot weather, or an atmosphere merely filtered and cleaned and therefore made healthier. Obviously the first process is much more expensive and much more desirable for most people than the second, but since both were called by the same name, manufacturers and speculative builders did not hesitate to take advantage of the public confusion and talk loudly about the wonderful air-conditioning features of their product

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or their houses. Today the term is applied only to the less pretentious accomplishment, and we now refer to an actually cooled atmosphere as *air-cooled*.

Regardless of its merits, Americans tend to be convinced of the wonders of mass production. Almost everyone believes that if you make one thing for a hundred dollars, you can make a thousand of the same thing by machinery for, let us say, ten dollars each. There is a fallacy—and a major fallacy—in this superstitious faith. In any mass production process there is a limit to the quantity which can be produced at maximum economy. To determine this limit is difficult, since both human and mechanical factors are involved. But it is probably a shrewd guess that this limit will be far more quickly reached in a complex and and especially in a bulky operation than it will in a small and compact operation. Thus the cost curve of producing a magazine, let us say, will tend downward almost indefinitely according to the number of copies produced. Much more quickly will washing machines reach a maximum production at minimum per unit cost. Even more quickly will automobiles reach this point. If anyone tends to doubt this, let him make a graph of the price of Fords from the time the first low price Ford appeared to the last pre-war car. Let him weight this graph with changes in the costs of labor and materials and with compensatory changes in the number of man hours required for the making of each car. Let him then compare the price curve with the number of Fords turned out. The result will roughly indicate what I am driving at.

Now most people think of prefabrication in terms of this sort of mass production. One economist defines it as "the manufacture of houses in factories by production-line methods broadly analogous to the techniques employed in automobile plants." Prefabrication in this sense has been practiced for many years by a handful of what can only be described as bungalow manufacturers. They have turned out interchangeable units constructed by old fashioned carpentry norms which are shipped to the point where they are wanted and then quickly assembled to make a perfectly serviceable but rather flimsy structure well suited for summer vacation purposes, and for year-round living only if you spend a lot of money yourself fixing them up. This, obviously, is a very restricted field.

What the modern advocates of prefabrication look forward to is something far more permanent and substantial and finished: a house, including all the latest devices for simplified living, that will be shipped to you in a number of packing boxes and then assembled on the spot in very short order. Such a building must be suitable for year-round occupancy, which means that in all the more temperate areas of the United States it must include a heating plant, refrigeration, cooking facilities, hot and cold water, bathrooms, etc. Now if one applies to so cumbersome and elaborate a mechanism the limitation hinted at a moment ago, it seems likely that the maximum output at minimum price of such mass produced houses will be relatively low in any given factory operation. If we further take into account the fact that this sort of mass production allows for very little variety in design and hence is likely to meet with heavy public sales resistance, we can understand better why only one of the aircraft manufacturers has formulated any plan whatever to use its facilities in this direction after the war.

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Enthusiasts for this sort of prefabrication should bear in mind that Americans still view their homes as something to fit their needs rather than something to fulfil a very specific task. These needs are complex and vary tremendously. They vary with the number of children in the family, with the occupations of members of the family, with the tastes and interests of individuals in the family. Here is a far greater range than can be applied to an automobile or an icebox. Until Americans as a nation begin to look upon their homes as they look upon their clothes or their cars—as something quite impermanent which you do not hesitate to throw away when you have got tired of it or when it grows shabby—there will probably be only a limited, a very limited, market for "dwelling machines."

Hence I cannot be particularly sanguine about the one prefabrication activity which has gone beyond the stage of mere talk. For years Mr. Buckminster Fuller, a brilliant theoretician and an equally brilliant practical designer, has been playing with and perfecting and trying to put in concrete form his idea of a dwelling machine, to which he applies the name "Dymaxion." His concept is both revolutionary and simple. Instead of building a house up from the ground, he proposes to plant a central mast in the ground and then suspend the house from it. There are a number of engineering advantages to this scheme. It enables us to make full use of all we have learned—particularly in the last few years in connection with airplane construction—about materials in tension rather than compression. This knowledge, if applied to a machine-to-live-in, would undoubtedly make possible substantial economies both in the amount of material used (weight) and in cost. Obviously these principles could only with great difficulty be applied on the job, in "tailor-made" fashion. Too much precision and engineering skill is required. Only on a mass production, factory basis can they be profitably used.

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Mr. Fuller found an aircraft company (Beech) and a labor union (the Machinists, AFL) sufficiently interested in the possibilities of his idea to be willing to take a chance with it. In Wichita, Kansas, they have been doing the preliminary work necessary to put the Dymaxion into production. Very wisely they are at the moment concentrating their attention on what might be called an institutional market—particularly an Army and Navy market for barracks purposes. Presumably they may also find a certain export market. I say they are wise, for I cannot believe that the general public in the United States in any near future will take kindly to the Dymaxion. Its shape alone, whether octagonal or circular, will discourage the American woman, who is very conservative in her tastes, knows nothing about the engineering advantages of the Dymaxion and cares less. It is the American woman who buys the American home.

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But as I have said, there is a secondary meaning attached to prefabrication. This consists of prefabricating, or factory constructing, specific elements in the home, leaving a great deal of diversity possible in the finished product. Thus complete bathroom units have been devised which can be sent out in substantially finished form and installed in any house where they fit the available space. The same thing can be done with kitchen and laundry units, and it already has been done for a long time with heating units. All this mechanism essential to every house erected in regions requiring genuine shelter—i.e., in the greater part of the United States—may be further combined and streamlined until the whole mechanical heart of a dwelling consists of one or two mass produced units around which a shell can be constructed to suit the owner's fancy. Even the shell can be far more factory built than has been the rule in the past, in that this shell can be constructed of prefinished units rather than built up out of semi-finished materials, as is the case with old fashioned houses.

Here there is certainly a great field for new techniques and new processes, and enough business people are interested in the possibilities to make it certain that after the war we shall see a great extension in the use of such prefabrication. Even before the war the Gunnison Housing Corporation (now a subsidiary of the US Steel) had accomplished a great deal in the rationalized application of this technique. By means of patented wall units, built out of reinforced plywoods and veneers, it had developed a very simple construction system which was also sufficiently elastic to allow for variations in individual taste and in individual needs. It is not yet certain what this firm will do after the war, but the approach at the outset was realistic and foreshadowed the principal development in the building industry—the use of factory finished wall and roof units.

A number of other materials have been adapted to the same purpose. Fully ten years ago a Washington firm which had for many years manufactured pre-cast, exposed-aggregate concrete slabs for facing monumental structures (notably the Bahai Temple near Chicago) applied their technique to slabs suitable for low cost housing. A few houses so constructed were erected in the suburbs of the national capital. Here weight is a deterrent factor, for these slabs are necessarily very heavy.

Gypsum laminated with paper is one of the most recently perfected materials for such factory-finished wall, floor and roofing units. With this material the name of Henry J. Kaiser is frequently associated. And of course for many years there have been various kinds of cinder and concrete blocks—more of them in the offing—which have proved a sturdy, lasting and inexpensive material for building the shell of a house.

These new developments will naturally have a considerable effect on the planning of homes. For one thing, they make unnecessary both peaked roofs and cellars, items of expense completely out of proportion to their utility. How these two features of the traditional house can most gracefully and practically be eliminated is a problem not yet solved. There is at present a considerable vogue for what I should describe as the Cartesian school of residential architects. They stem from Frank Lloyd Wright, although what they borrow from their master is all of his intellectual aridity and none of his marvelous if often unpractical playfulness and grace. Their solution is to pave a considerable area of ground with concrete—to make what they call a concrete "mat"—and then to erect a house upon this, using areas of the concrete for outdoor terraces, "car ports," etc. The structure becomes something like the crown of a hat sitting on its brim, and in most cases is visualized as only one story high. The New York Museum of Modern Art, in cooperation with the *Ladies' Home Journal*, has arranged a most interesting exhibition of models and plans by members of this school, of which an illustrated catalogue is available.

My fundamental criticism of the Cartesians is that the concrete mat system, replacing not only the traditional cellar but also all other foundations, does not take into account the facts of nature or the variations in climate so characteristic of our country. It might serve in a desert. But tree roots and moisture in the soil are enemies which they have not taken into account. Furthermore, the use of such a slab of concrete tends to seal mechanical parts of the house which should not be sealed—especially drain pipes.

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Another disadvantage of their planning is that, despite their disclaimers, it is only suited for use on plots of considerable area, since all their devices to achieve privacy—so necessary for people who quite literally would be living in glass houses—would be frustrated in a jiffy by human curiosity unless that curiosity in turn were frustrated by distance. And finally, only their master, Mr. Wright, has so far learned how to use a flat roof with any grace whatever. The flat roof is an essential if one would build economically. Yet its connotations are unhappy, and it becomes miserable to the eye if it is dealt with according to strict Cartesian principles.

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In these pages I have said nothing about traditional houses. Of course millions more of them will be built. But I suspect that there will be fewer and fewer of them as time goes on for the simple reason that they will be beyond our pocketbook. Lumber, I am certain, will never be as cheap again as it was before this war. The skilled building trades, which are essential to sound construction of a traditional sort, are paid at scales disproportionate to the financial resources of our people as long as the older, time-consuming methods are used. The result, long before the war, was widespread employment of unskilled labor by speculative builders, leading to shoddy results which in the long run satisfied no one except the builder, who took his profit and got out.

The moment general public acceptance is built up for sounder and much less expensive alternatives, the wooden frame structure to which we have so long been accustomed will tend to become a luxury product with which those with the means to do so may indulge their sentimentality.

For those who wish to try the new, I have two simple pieces of advice: be sure that the machinery of your house is not so sealed in that you have to tear the house down to repair it, and be sure that the material out of which the shell is built is a material with a reasonable amount of successful history behind it.

The Man Who Lost The British Election

GEORGE CATLIN

THE British Election Campaign started off with a broadcast speech by Winston Churchill that caused no little dismay among his own supporters. Too truculent for some, it was not constructive enough for others. Even the *Times,* almost official Conservative organ, regarded it without favor.

The tone of this first radio speech gave Clement Attlee, who made the second broadcast, his opportunity. He took it. His speech was dignified, restrained, in the best English political tradition, and confused those who thought that Laborites were all "wild men." It was constructive and calculated to win support from the large numbers who had not made up their minds how to vote. Even opponents were prepared to concede that Attlee had established a new position for himself and had advanced his party's chances.

The Election did not take fire until the invitation by Churchill to Attlee to accompany him to the Berlin Conference produced certain quite unforeseen consequences.

The British people woke up one morning to discover that the Empire was apparently governed not by the Premier or Parliament, the King or the people, but by a gentleman of Hungarian descent who used to be instructor at Harvard University. In brief, the British Empire was governed by Harold Laski. They would have roared their heads off with amusement at the suggestion, if the Conservative Party office had not made it plain that it had decided to take the matter seriously. From that time on Conservative propaganda hammered the Laski issue as a vote-winner for Toryism.

What had happened was that after Attlee, Labor Party leader, had already accepted Churchill's invitation to go to Berlin, Laski rushed into print with a press statement to the effect that, since issues would arise that had not been discussed by the Labor Party Executive, Attlee could only go as an observer.

It appeared that Attlee, before accepting, had consulted his senior colleagues, men who had held office with him in the War Cabinet. Ernest Bevin came out with a statement that Attlee would go to Berlin with the full confidence of these colleagues. Obviously, continuity of foreign policy is a practical matter and not an absolute principle. Notoriously, Churchill had not continued the foreign policy of Chamberlain. Neither Churchill nor Attlee could bind their respective parties for the future, and anyhow only Churchill could act as head of the government. Attlee was to proceed to the Conference as leader of the opposition, privy councilor and consultant who would be in a position to know what decisions were taken, and why, and to give friendly advice upon them since it was possible that within a few weeks he might be Premier himself.

Although Attlee had consulted leading members of the Labor Parliamentary Executive he had, however, apparently not taken the advice of the chairman, for the year, of the National Party, Laski, who was chairman of its executive committee. The chairman is such by seniority, the names being taken in rotation. In the Conservative Party there would be no question of the

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chairman of the party being consulted on such an issue of high policy in which parliament is sovereign. But, smarting under the defection of Macdonald, the Labor Party had laid down rules which bound its leader to abide on issues of policy committing the party to the decisions of party conference and to their interpretation by the executive committee.

It was open to Laski under the circumstances to see or telephone Attlee and privately to warn him of the chairman's views upon the capacity in which Attlee could serve in Berlin. With an election impending this would seem to have been the prudent course. Or, if pressure were required, Laski could have consulted his executive democratically and discovered the majority opinion. Guided whether by ineptitude or personal vanity he did neither of these things. He chose rather in the public press to advise President Truman and Marshal Stalin of the views of Professor Harold Laski about the capacity in which alone Attlee could go to Berlin. In a year Laski, who is not a Member of Parliament or party candidate, would relapse into the comparative obscurity which has characterized most ex-chairmen. But this was his year of office and he proposed to make his weight felt. Moreover he had earlier publicly expressed his distaste for Attlee's leadership as once he had done for that of Macdonald, whose vanity he had so incisively and amusingly chastised by mimicry and denunciation. He had a taste for being King-maker. He had not been put on the list of party election speakers selected to broadcast. But he was determined never to be ignored. He could "show them," as indeed he had done since the days of the Boston police strike.

The Conservative Party machine saw its opportunity and seized it with both hands. Churchill referred to this obscure controlling committee, challenging the authority of parliament, upon which British policy was made to depend—although frank to say, party organizations have usually had some share in shaping policy and the Conservative executive committee was scarcely less obscure. The Conservative press carried headline after headline. The members of the Labor Party were correspondingly nonplussed and did their best to play the indiscretion down. Laski nevertheless had the satisfaction of being the center of attraction.

The situation was further complicated by the Conservative press publicity given to certain of Professor Laski's political views. In writing in the past he had adopted an attitude of philosophic pessimism and expectation of violence. He had reiterated a doubt whether capitalism would permit radical change of its system without fighting for it, and had emphasized its connection with fascist methods. Hence, interested although he might be in Anglo-American relations, he was, he stated, much more interested in Anglo-Russian relations. At Nottingham he was alleged to have gone beyond his former statements. His answers to questions reported, as he asserted, in a garbled form became the subject of a law suit, a writ being issued for libel.

Also the Conservative press took precautions to give adequate publicity to the fact that Laski had said at the Blackpool Labor Party Conference that during the period of Coalition, they "had come to know Mr. Churchill," and that the country could not be fed on "a diet of great perorations," a slight on Mr. Churchill's war leadership. He has added that, as touching the right of a premier to a dissolution of Parliament at the time of his own choice, he, Professor Laski, had his own views; but that, on this subject, the King's views would prevail "at present."

In the opinion of the late editor of one of London's great Liberal journals Laski gave the Conservatives their first break in a campaign that had opened dully and not very favorably for them. Other editors, before this Attlee-Laski episode and in part as a consequence of the Attlee broadcast, had respectively given the Conservative Party a majority of only fifty and of twenty. In this latter case the Liberals would hold the balance of power. After the publicity given to Laski's indiscretion the number of seats lost to Labor ranged in the opinion of party members up to a hundred. This last figure is almost certainly a gross exaggeration but a much smaller figure could be decisive.

The London *Observer* of June 24 commented: "The electoral argle-bargle . . . at its worst becomes a mere game of bogy-bogy, with a tactless Professor considerably flattered by promotion to the office of Ogre-in-chief." The incident has the gratifying result that many people who had never heard of Laski before will have heard of him. It will have demonstrated the obvious truths, well known above all to Mr. Churchill, that foreign affairs cannot be taken out of politics, and that responsibility for them rests with the government of the time being. But Laski is likely to have the more dubious satisfaction of being known as the man whose personal vanity lost his party their electoral chances of victory in 1945.

Renewing a Friendship

EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

"ENOUGH unpacking for one night," said Davison to himself as he snapped his grip shut, swung it off the collapsible stand and slid it under his bed. After a quick glance at himself in the mirror he stepped out to the narrow, carpeted hall; he remembered just in time that

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no one at the informal Maine inn ever locked his door; he left the key on the inside.

A few strides brought him to the main stairway and down to the well-peopled lobby. At the foot of the steps stood a small black bulletin board announcing Keno for eight o'clock that evening. (For the morrow a shuffleboard tournament in the afternoon, bowling in the evening.) To Davison's left an older woman leaned over the glass-topped hotel desk and addressed an agreeable room clerk in confidential tones. He crossed the large numdah rugs past small knots of mostly elderly people arranged round in varicolored and vari-shaped chairs and settees. At the end of the large sitting room a bell boy was ranging in line a number of card tables one against the other.

Finally, in the far corner in the radio-card room, which also served as the library, Davison nodded affably to the fellow guests clustered around a small table radio; one of the men ostentatiously pressed hard on a small circular box to provide sufficient "ground" for the Boston station to come through. As Davison turned toward the well-filled white shelves, he found himself wondering why at this moment of so little real news people should listen with such rapt attention to a man, say, like Cecil Brown. Was it the accent? He shrugged his shoulders and began glancing over the titles on the deep top shelf.

A dark maroon edition of Browning's "Aurora Leigh" led off and the volumes which followed included Zane Grey's, "The Spirit of the Border," Max Brand's "Destry Rides Again," a Jeffrey Farnol or two and such bygone best-sellers as Ian Hay's "The First Hundred Thousand" and De Morgan's "Joseph Vance." It occurred to Davison that nothing was so pallid, so flat and so dead as yesterday's or last generation's best-sellers. No sign on top of what he was seeking; as he remembered it the book was orange-backed. The next two shelves were no more rewarding—only a similar mélange of murder mysteries, scattered minor classics of the turn of the century and fiction successes long deservedly forgotten. As he stood there nervously tugging at the ends of his trim, dark mustache, Davison was glad to hear Cecil signing off and note that the radio group was breaking up. Now he could get at the remaining shelves which ranged below.

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There it was at last, wedged between an early Ellen Glasgow and "The Hammersmith Murders." For the third straight summer it was his. Davison tucked his old friend under his arm and sauntered forth to pass the time of day with a few of the vacationers who had not been drawn into the game. "Tinker's Leave" would be all the more delectable for being put off for a while now that he was sure of this eighteen-year-old tale of Maurice Baring's.* Why wasn't there a copy in his local public library anyway?

When Davison had said his last good-night and the lobby began to empty of bingo players, knitters and mere conversationalists alike, he decided to walk down to the water before turning in. He had just heard a lot about weather, food, travels and past ailments, but there was no denying the kindliness and genuine friendly feelings of his fellow guests. He was surprised that he had encountered so many with sons still overseas. As he started down the cushiony pine-needle path Davison squeezed the book more tightly under his arm. It was dark under the lush pine trees. At the end of the path the dark rocks loomed against the starry sky to the north. At their foot the cold water of an ebb tide lapped softly.

"This time," Davison said almost aloud, "I want Maurice Baring—if he can—to answer a few questions. Why did he find Russia admirable on every count at the very moment the Russo-Japanese war was showing up its worst depths of official corruption and inefficiency? What had become of the endless conversation of despond, the general feeling of hopelessness which marked all pre-Soviet plays and novels? To contrast the ignorance of Miles Consterdine, a young English bank clerk in Russia on his first long holiday, with the cultivation and wit of even lesser Russian army officers was a clever stunt. It made one think of the limitations of most supposedly educated Americans. But if the pre-Soviet élite to a man were so universally omniscient, why did the Russia of 1905 do so badly?"

The recollection of one incident made Davison chuckle to himself. Several war correspondents were having a long and rather enlightening discussion of Shakespeare and Ibsen, to which Miles had not contributed one syllable. Suddenly they turned to him and asked Miles to name his favorite play. He said he did not know much about the theater but spoke of a London performance of "Charley's Aunt" which he had much enjoyed. The whole contrast in a nutshell! And when the Russians and other continentals in Maurice Baring's cast discoursed upon the eternal verities it was simply superb.

At this point in his lonely cogitations, it occurred to Davison to consider the political atmosphere in which Baring wrote two decades ago. Soviet Russia was still a pariah among the nations. So that while he may have had no political motives in writing then so warmly of the Russia which he loves, "Tinker's Leave" must have served as a reminder of the great potential which lay beyond the impenetrable gulf which so long has stretched between the land of the Revolution

*Doubleday (out of print).

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and the failing world of Western capitalism. Whatever his reasons, Mr. Baring could scarcely have painted a more appealing picture of that great land.

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The North Island light continued to flash off and on at regular intervals as Davison looked out to sea. Russia was indeed still a vast mystery. (Its critics and apologists even today more sharply divided than ever.) He felt that the greatest danger came from the critics, who by harping solely on Soviet injustices and iniquities were implicitly and inevitably calling for a war to secure their demands. If not immediately while our military establishment was at peak strength, then not many years hence when we should be forced to battle for supremacy in the world. What folly!

But as Davison slowly turned to walk back to his room, he could not help thinking that our present Russian apologists—as urbane Maurice Baring before them—overrated Russian virtues considerably. He thought of the fellow-journalist who in all seriousness had assured him recently that while we had political liberty in the United States, only the Russians enjoyed real economic liberty. This apparently intelligent observer brushed aside a reminder that every Soviet citizen is directly dependent upon his government and the ruling party for his job, food, clothes and lodging. The Soviet citizen had economic liberty because there was no unemployment. The journalist finally was forced to admit that Moscow had not yet demonstrated its ability to produce full employment and adequate civilian necessities. But he doggedly stuck to his formula.

As Davison approached the deserted verandah, he asked himself why so few other Americans were able to speak of Soviet Russia objectively. Was it a general inability to view things other than politically after the stress of the past ten years? Why was he himself so unable to rush blindly into partisanship or hostility? A slow smile crossed his features as he mounted the last few steps; it must be that he was getting old. But a few moments later his mouth stretched to a positive grin as he lolled luxuriously under a heavy New England blanket, turned to page one and began: "Although Miles Consterdine was twenty-seven, he had never been to Paris till this Easter . . ."

Farewell:

Off to the wars you have to go.
Before you return my full years know
That I shall be older, may be dead
And you be living in my stead.
Or if I live instead of you,
You shall be old and I shall too.

WITTER BYNNER.

Protestants and Catholics

BENSON Y. LANDIS

PROTESTANTS and Roman Catholics have recorded their common basic convictions. They have published documents with the imprints of both their official agencies. They have made separate statements on great social issues, and one who does not know the original documents cannot tell whether they come from Rome or from an official interdenominational organization of Protestants. They have given out a pattern for peace. And, despite differences and conflicts, past and present, certain Roman Catholics and Protestants practice mutual aid, and work shoulder to shoulder on civic tasks of first importance.

Several hundred clerical and lay leaders of Roman Catholicism, Protestantism and Judaism have put their names to a notable document outlining the basic convictions that they share. "We believe in one God, Creator and sustainer of the universe. . . . We hold that He . . . manifests His being, power, wisdom and love through His works and especially in the mind, will and personality of man. We believe that the mind of man reflects, though imperfectly, the mind of God. We believe that . . . man's true freedom and happiness depend on his obedience to the will of God as known to Him. . . . We reject theories of race which affirm the essential superiority of one racial strain over another. . . . We believe, with the founders of this republic, that individual rights are an endowment from God. . . ."

On fifteen current social questions, ranging from agriculture through responsibility of ownership to international economic cooperation, Roman Catholics and Protestants, speaking at different times and places, have made declarations that contain striking parallelisms. On these issues, one may say that Roman Catholics and Protestants "have said about the same things." With respect to immediate postwar planning they have both asked for some form of workable international organization, to which definite powers should be delegated. They have declared such an international organization should carry on political, economic and social cooperation. They have expressed a special concern about minority racial and cultural groups, and have called for their participation in the common life. They have said that special efforts must be made to support the family, and that there must be a just domestic order. Almost 150 officials in Roman Catholicism, Protestantism and Judaism signed the seven-point "Pattern for Peace" in 1943.

When one compares their general social ideals, one finds that when they confront specific situations, Roman Catholics and Protestants frequently come to the same judgments and con-

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clusions about what is good for society. Certain consistent thoughts that run throughout the documents have been brought together in a brief summary, perhaps the only summary ever attempted of these numerous pronouncements. In "Religion and the Good Society" this author humbly presented this summary. Every line in it came from an official utterance of a religious agency. Every sentence appeared consistent with other sentences written by those of other faiths.

Here is the text, as yet uncorrected and unchallenged:

"Religious principles are the basis of true social order; they integrate social life and give it moral unity.

"The good social order results when men seek to live for each other, strive for brotherhood, and are imbued with the spirit of justice.

"Personality possesses the highest value; the dignity of the individual soul before God and the recognition that all are children of God must undergird all efforts for human improvement.

"Ownership of property is a social trust; property should be administered for the welfare of all; property should be widely distributed.

"Through insurance we should safeguard the members of society from the hazards of life and the major economic insecurities.

"Employees and employers both have the right to organize; in this process both have responsibilities for promoting the public welfare.

"There should be adequate machinery for conciliation, mediation and arbitration of disputes.

"The wage must be sufficient for the well-being of the worker and his family; on the worker rests the duty of faithful performance in return for the wage.

"Hours of labor should be set at a point consistent with physical, mental and moral well-being; at least one day's rest in seven should be provided.

"Women in industry must have safe and sanitary conditions, special protection against exploitation, and employment that benefits the family and community.

"Economic democracy will be promoted by wide self-organization on the part of economic groups, motivated by a profound religious spirit directing social reconstruction.

"Complete social organization implies the creation of adequate international agencies, especially for economic and political cooperation.

"Every citizen shall be free to follow his conscience in matters of religious belief and practice; the Creator endowed men with inalienable civil rights such as freedom of speech, press and assembly.

"Cooperative economic movements are promising techniques of adjustment and improvement; the interest of the consumer must be kept high in all economic endeavors.

"Through different races, God has enriched mankind with a diversity of gifts; there is no inherent superiority of any race; there should be mutual helpfulness among races.

"Farmers should be encouraged to own land; the farm as a good home for a family must be safeguarded; modern nations need a healthy agrarian life."

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Protestants, Roman Catholics and Jews have met over 30,000 times (something of a miracle) under the auspices of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish official agencies have sponsored two national conferences on unemployment, in 1930 and 1940. They have published the reports of the conferences with the imprints of all on one document. When representatives of the three groups investigated the Centralia Case, and the Enginemen's Strike on the Western Maryland Railroad, they also came to the same conclusions and published documents with the imprints of each.

Great Papal encyclicals and the great declarations of Oxford contain passages with "striking similarities," says Adolf Keller, who had subjected them to careful study in *Christendom*. These similarities are seen not only with respect to practical advice for dealing with social problems, but also with respect to the attitude of the church toward the world, toward the "total state," and toward the leading principles which should activate the conduct of the individual. Dr. Keller had examined many encyclicals, not only those on social subjects. He stressed the "admirable" statement of Pope Pius XII "Summi Pontificatus" in 1939, in which was stressed "the renewal of allegiance to Christ."

Roman Catholic and Protestant official agencies now both favor the extension of old age and survivors' insurance to many groups not covered, including their own lay employees. Individuals in both groups have backed the Farm Security Administration, when it was under fire. Official agencies have both favored the principle of public assistance in meeting housing needs.

Roman Catholics and Protestants pray for one another. In a desperate, broken and bleeding world, it seems that the least we can do is not to fight one another in the public press. Beyond this, we can pour oil and bind up wounds, and do practical works of reconciliation, leaving much to time and the grace of God.

It is also good for us Protestants to appreciate what the Roman Catholic Church is. The Roman Catholic Church is today the greatest church in Christendom. It has a great body of social teaching. It has the devotion of masses of people. It has performed great works of mercy and edu-

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cation. It has, more than we, provided a church for the poor. Its houses of worship are filled with praying people.

This article does not pretend to convey the whole story of Roman Catholic-Protestant relationships. But it does pretend to recount an important part of the story, much neglected at a time when many differences are appearing. And what are we at our best called upon to emphasize in these times? It is here contended that we have the supreme obligation to cultivate and to emphasize the common interests.

The Screen

Unsunny Italy

TWO NEW movies are showing an aspect of Italy that is not the country of Dante, Boccacio or tourists, and is not likely to be covered by the guide books of the future except in passing footnotes. There has been a scarcity of films about the war in Italy. The newsreels and March of Time were well on the job; and that first-rate documentary film made by John Huston, "San Pietro" (reviewed in THE COMMONWEAL, May 25, 1945) is finally being released by the government and is now being exhibited in New York and elsewhere. But Hollywood productions on that subject are almost nonexistent; therefore we welcome these two films: one that shows the fighting in Italy and the other which deals with the military government in charge during the American occupation.

"Ernie Pyle's 'Story of G.I. Joe'" rightfully starts with the arrival of men in Africa and their baptism of fire. At the very beginning Ernie Pyle follows the G.I. Joes—and he goes all the way. This Scripps-Howard correspondent was not so famous then, but as he lives with the men and writes his daily pieces, we see why he loved them and they loved him. Pyle is by no means the hero of the film. The hero is many heroes—all the G.I. Joes who were "winning the war single-handed," who were doing the dirty work, who were meeting death for the first time ("first deaths are always worse"), who were living in foxholes, enduring all kinds of hardships with great fortitude and who even retained a sense of humor as they called out to Ernie: "Put my name in your paper." Because this picture moves slowly and realistically, because it is without glamorous stars and false heroics, and because it is packed with details of battle and intimate scenes between battles, it is one of the best war pictures ever to come out of Hollywood. Lester Cowan's production and William A. Wellman's excellent direction have missed no opportunity to portray the grimness of war, the waste, the exigencies of living under battle conditions. Just as Ernie Pyle, in his sincere and colorful reporting, covered the character of the men around him, so does the film give us moving and honest portraits of G.I. Joes. Credit must go to Leopold Atlas, Guy Endore, Philip Stevenson, who in writing this screenplay retained as much as possible of the Pyle flavor in spirit and in the incidents shown. It would be impossible to name all the actors whose performances deserve mention for long scenes or perhaps for only bit performances. Burgess Meredith merits praise for his restrained characterization of Pyle, who is frequently before the camera but never hogs the scene from the real heroes, who are portrayed with startling reality by Robert Mitchum, Fredie Steel and the entire cast of minor players directed by Wellman. The picture steps into its stride in the Italian scenes, in the long, slow march on Rome. The men who were green in Africa are now experienced. A wealth of small sequences builds up to give the complete picture of war; the sniping in the church ("This is a funny place to be killing men"), the taking of the town, the returning Italian civilians, the wedding of a soldier, the long siege at the monastery which is finally bombed ("Our own men's lives are worth more than the building"), Christmas in the foxholes, the removal of the dead on backs of donkeys, and perhaps the most stirring scene of all with the grief-choked words of the men as they pass by the body of their dead captain. "Surely something good must come out of this," comments Pyle. "I hope we can rejoice in victory so that another great war can never be possible." Ernie Pyle, himself, would be proud of this film for its fine tribute to the men who won his greatest affection: the infantry soldier—who had to go in and slug it out.

"A Bell for Adano" shows what happens in an Italian town after the American Army moves in and takes over. So much has already been said and written about John Hersey's novel and the play made from it that there is little to add about the movie except in the line of comparisons. Of the three, I liked the novel best. It is greatly moving in spite of Hersey's Saroyan-like heightened simplicity and sentiment. Both the play and the movie have to deal with a technical problem that the novel could handle by description: that is the business of dialogue between the Americans and Italians. Unfortunately, the film, like the play, chose to make the Italians talk in broken English so that most of them lose dignity and sound like comic opera characters. I wish, however, Director Henry King hadn't made so many of Adano's townsfolk also act like comedy relief. The film's theme is warmly human enough without any exaggerated comedy. Major Joppolo, who is in charge of Adano for the AMG, soon proves to the people, who have already spent 20 years cooperating with conquerors, that the Americans want to do good and they can provide laws that are just. He also proves that democracy can work—particularly when it is assisted by a little conniving and help from the heart as well as the head. Joppolo's problem is made harder when the General (softened considerably from Hersey's characterization, but no doubt Producer Louis Lighton ran into difficulty; the original of this rôle has since covered himself with glory) forbids the water carts to use a certain bridge. Since this bridge is the only entry into Adano for the necessary carts, Major Joppolo retracts the order, and at the film's end, finds himself removed to another post. Just as he leaves, the bell (which has become a symbol,

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for it represents what the villagers want more than anything else and it represents Joppolo's understanding of their desire) rings out; and although Joppolo failed as a soldier because of military red tape, we know he succeeded as a man and a democrat. In the film, John Hodiak, playing Joppolo quite differently from Fredric March's stage performance, makes the major a quiet, simple man who is not sure of himself, but is sure that he wants to do right by the villagers. Gene Tierney, in a blond wig, plays Tina, a rôle that has been built up somewhat but is still rather unnecessary and might have been improved if it had been only a bit part. William Bendix is splendid as the devoted sergeant who does everything he can to forestall Joppolo's removal. In spite of flaws, this is a film to be seen—particularly by anyone who did not read the book. A few of the scenes, like the homecoming of the Italian soldiers and the later arrival of the bell, provide excellent cinema; and the whole picture, if you can overlook its gushing, will strengthen your belief in the democratic system.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Labor Movement

Detroit in Transit

IN DETROIT these days nearly everything is in a state of flux. It would be a vulgar exaggeration to say that "the joint is jumpin'," but the joint is certainly moving, and in that motion can be seen reflections of most of the problems that vex us now and are going to vex us even more profoundly in the next few years.

The big difference is that in Detroit all the problems are tanglier, the conflicts sharper, the angles more acute. Since the town's industry has gone more completely into war work than that of any other large city in the country, it follows naturally that the jolt in shifting to peace is bound to be proportionately terrific.

The Detroit *Free Press,* for example, reports that the Ford people expect to cut down by December to 19,000 workers for all their plants in the Detroit area, a drop of 143,000 from the peak in 1943. A rather sickening drop. One official of the United Auto Workers, CIO, is privately and gloomily predicting that his union's membership, once at 1,200,000, might fade all the way to 300,000. This gloom is probably too deep.

The city is full of out-of-town labor, men and women, Negroes and whites who came in from the farms or up from the South, some of them making more money than they ever saw before in their lives. They don't want to go home, back to the corn and 'taters or to white supremacy. But meanwhile, what to do with them? The UAW has been trying to sell Henry Kaiser the idea of making autos in the Willow Run bomber plant, recently described by young Henry Ford in the now classic words, "expendable as a battleship." Kaiser is reported to be not biting.

One possible reason is fear of labor trouble. Kaiser's shipyards are AFL, and the AFL has insisted that if he sets up shop in Detroit, it would have to be under their union-label. Which is true to a pattern of jurisdictional conflict that has already tied Detroit into a few minor knots.

The problem was, and still is, who is going to get the work of reconverting the plants from war to peace work? The plants are mostly CIO, UAW to be exact, and the construction workers are AFL. This question recently had about 50,000 on strike before Dan Tracy, Assistant Secretary of Labor (formerly president of the AFL electrical workers) worked out an arbitration agreement between the AFL Building Trades Council and the UAW. It now remains to be seen whether the decisions arrived at by the arbitrator, who will be Tracy himself, prove palatable to the rank-and-file.

Even if they do, the chances are that there will be more strikes in Detroit, even before V-J Day. All the inflammable materials are there. And since V-E Day several pieces of fire-fighting equipment have been removed. It isn't simply that everyone is more susceptible to temptation now that the unions have been taken care of, but the communists in particular have suddenly lost all that passionate intensity with which they formerly fought for the no-strike pledge as for their very lives. Not that they have abandoned it. But unless Russia enters the Japanese war, they are obviously not going to risk any further losses of prestige and influence in the labor movement by a continuation of the ultra-conservative line made popular by the ousted and apparently unlamented Earl Browder.

Recently the comrades suffered a bitter blow in Detroit when they lost control of the leadership of Ford Local 600, the largest union local in the country. So ashamed they were, the defeat wasn't even mentioned in the *Daily Worker.* And it is significant that the former president, W. G. Grant, led the drive to uphold the no-strike pledge in a recent UAW referendum. The pledge was upheld by a 2-1 vote. But reports have it now that the UAW executive board will decide at its July meeting to recommend a change, at least regarding those plants engaged in civilian production.

So the lid will be practically removed. And there will be plenty of good irritating reasons for the pot to boil over. People are losing jobs and they are far from sure of getting them back. As overtime is eliminated, take-home pay is going down sharply. Wage increases are still tabu, except to people like John L. Lewis who make a practice of sneering at the no-strike pledge. President Truman seems too unwilling to break up his honeymoon with Congress to push a decent reconversion program with any show of force. And Congress seems to be paralyzed with indecision, the heat and a pervading sense of false security. What better invitation to disaster?

But most of all, the Detroit future looks like trouble because not only do you have on one side a big, militant, nervous union, but on the other side you have some of the most powerful, the most unregenerate, the most anti-labor employers in the country. In Detroit most of the terrible things that Eric Gill used to say about industrialism are perfectly true. The employers sit like gods on an Olympus of profits, and far below them on a plain of mechanized monotony the distant employees, like rebellious children, not only refuse to offer sacrifice, but desecrate the altars. This is gilding the skunkweed a little, but the view from the top of Ford, Chrysler and General Motors is still pretty imperial. It is surely no exaggeration to say that their concept of "the rights of management" is something considerably more absolute, considerably more intransigent than Louis XIV's opinions on "the divine right of kings." They are by no means

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reconciled to collective bargaining as it is understood by free men. As a matter of fact, the inside story is that the Chrysler Corporation was mainly responsible for the refusal of the National Association of Manufacturers to okay the labor-management charter worked out by AFL, CIO and Eric Johnston's Chamber of Commerce. Reason: the charter is too pro-labor.

There is no room to speak of the Negro problem, which exploded once and may yet explode again, or the housing problem, or the coming mayoralty election, wherein Mayor Jeffries will come out of the employers' corner to meet Richard Frankensteen, UAW vice-president, the choice of the CIO. There is no room to handle the complicated struggle for power inside the UAW between the Addes faction (pro-communist) and the Reuther faction (anti-communist), which since the last convention has been more or less top-dog and is still going up.

If you want to know about these fascinating developments, read *The Wage Earner,* published fortnightly by the Detroit ACTU (Association of Catholic Trade Unionists) and currently one of the best labor papers in the country. It is most fortunate, in fact, that the ACTU in Detroit is so strong, so active and so influential for good in the local labor movement. And it is fortunate too that Archbishop Mooney is one of the most progressive, most labor-conscious prelates in the country. Detroit is in flux, and in the flux there is floating dynamite. It is comforting to know that the Church is on hand and doing fine.

JOHN C. CORT.

Sacred and Profane Success

ANNE FREMANTLE

LUCILLE PAPIN BORDEN has written a breathless life of Frances Cabrini[1]; Henry Wise Miller an excellently told, witty and tender one of his late wife, Alice Duer Miller[2] of "White Cliffs of Dover" fame. Mother Cabrini was born in 1850, the thirteenth child of Lombardy farmers; Miss Miller in 1874, of affluent and ancient New Yorker stock. Both women had great natural good looks, astonishing vitality and, in spite of frail appearances, excellent health. Frances Cabrini had the more character; Alice Miller the more brains. Their lives, from start to finish, could not have been more entirely different. Frances Cabrini founded a convent for her dolls at the age of six; Alice Duer threw herself into the garden fountain on a chilly autumn afternoon the better to enact Undine; Frances Cabrini founded 67 houses in her 67 years of life, with four thousand professed nuns in her order and five thousand children in her schools and hospitals; Alice Miller ghosted at least one White House statement for President Wilson; by her gentle "Are Women People?" struck a valiant, if always ladylike, blow for women's suffrage; she was on the cover of the *Saturday Evening Post* times without number; was serialized in *Harpers,* discovered by Sam Goldwyn, and in forty-three years writing "prose, verse, reporting scenarios, plays, political propaganda" only had three manuscripts rejected. Both women, all their lives, commanded the devoted allegiance of their immediate families, including elder sisters (Mother Cabrini) and mothers-in-law (Alice Miller), and of numberless men and women. These included, in Frances Cabrini's case, the Popes whom she served, as well as a veritable posse of bishops and cardinals, and also her nuns, who, without her knowledge, obtained from the Holy See a decree requiring her to remain Superior General as long as she lived. Alice Miller had the life-long affection of a large number of men who "felt strongly that they could make Alice Miller a better husband than the man to whom she was married" . . . yet she could have spent "three weeks with a man on a desert island and no one would raise an eyebrow." The Days, Booth Tarkington and Harpo Marx were faithful friends always, and the nurses in the hospital when Alice lay dying, broke down completely. "I will gladly take her place" was said of her at the end. And if the leaving of life is a test for the living of it, how superbly they both, in their separate ways, died: Frances Cabrini ordering each of her nuns a new habit, and for Christmas greeting sending the "Emitte lucem tuam" verse of Psalm xlii.

Alice Miller, knowing many months in advance what she had to face, yet "at six o'clock in the morning, late at night, after a trying day, Alice was always the same. I will not be misunderstood," writes her husband of those months, "when I say it was the happiest time of my life," and of her slow dying he adds "it was like seeing someone born again before your eyes, slowly, definitely, clearly, she was like one released from a harder into an easier world."

And Frances Cabrini, venerated by some 90,000 Italo-Americans she had evangelized, hospitalized, educated, as well as by numberless South Americans, and Europeans, said at the end: "I have done nothing. The Sacred Heart of Jesus has done everything. I am merely a witness of the wonders of God." Alice Miller, without expressed faith—"it was her boast she had no inner life"—yet with the serenity of a stoic, and the sincerity of a mathematician, could comfort her husband, without thought of herself, in her last illness: "you and I have managed to disregard time pretty successfully; try and keep on doing so." Mr. Miller's is a delightful account of an almost perfect marriage; it's a cockle-warming book, civilized, agreeable, amusing, full of good anecdotes and appropriate quotations. It builds up, as a biography should, so lively a picture of its subject that at the end the reader both feels he knew her, and wishes to goodness he had known her. And perhaps the most important point about this singularly slight, unpretentious story is that it is both true and pleasant.

We are so used, alas, in this generation, to life being nasty, brutish and short, and only celluloid pleasant, luxurious and long, that we are all, even when unconsciously, infected with a Jansenism, or an inferiority-

(1) Francesca Cabrini: without Staff or Scrip. Lucille Papin Borden. Macmillan. $2.75.

(2) All Our Lives: Alice Duer Miller. Henry Wise Miller. Coward. $3.00.

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complex, or what our Latin-American neighbors call portmanteau-wise "sadomasochismo." For us, literature, like life, must be sordid: the grapes of wrath must spatter those for whom the bell has tolled, whilst out of the night into darkness at noon emerges the army of shadows. Brave men these, who walk in the sun to die on the seventh cross. But when we read, "What she put her hand to she carried out successfully. The fact that she was an attractive and distinguished woman naturally had something to do with it . . . our married life was successful . . . in 1899 one of the unsolved problems of mathematics related to the application of numbers, which are discreet, to the continuity of space. Alice's prize-winning thesis in her senior year at Barnard [Mrs. Astor had said to Mrs. Duer, "What a pity . . . that lovely girl going to college"] anticipated the research which finally resulted in the solution. She was Phi Beta Kappa and Doctor of Letters of Columbia" . . . we rub our eyes.

Frances Cabrini, too, humanly as well as divinely, was tremendously successful. She had, as gardeners say, a green finger; what she planted, prospered. And "without staff or scrip," as Lucille Papin Borden well shows, starting out completely from scratch, this tiny nun nursed yellow fever, combatted arson, climbed 1,000 feet underground to save the souls of Italian miners working there, clambered across the Andes on mule-back (never having sat a horse before), crossed the Atlantic 37 times, yet remained so simple that when she found 52 candlesticks before Our Lady in the Cathedral in Rio, she could write "perhaps the number had some significance, but not being familiar with the language I could not ask why there should be fifty-two."

Both women had tremendous moral, as well as physical courage. Alice Miller could defend prostitutes in her ironical lines "To a Certain Gentleman"; Frances Cabrini, too, gathered them up and reformed them. Both spoke their mind about color prejudice and other injustices, as and when and wherever they met them; yet both remained essentially feminine, even when fierce; both had immense patience and prudence and tact.

Lucille Papin Borden spoils her story by cluttering the broad outlines with a mass of irrelevant detail. We are told the exact location on every steamer of Mother Cabrini's cabin on every one of her crossings; we are told precisely what she ate at which meals and those which her companions missed or lost are also enumerated. We are told, even on land, what she had for breakfast, lunch, tea, dinner; what Mass she heard in which church; who gave her how much money; who asked her to stay overnight, and who only invited her to a meal. Yet her Constitution is nowhere given; nor what differentiated her Rule from that of other religious houses; the promises of Our Lord to Saint Margaret Mary, which are in every book of devotion, are quoted in full; but Frances Cabrini's inner life is relegated to a few highly imaginative and overwritten pages at the beginning, and a few far too brief lines toward the end. There is no account—indeed no mention—of her naturalization, or of the reasons that prompted her to take this step.

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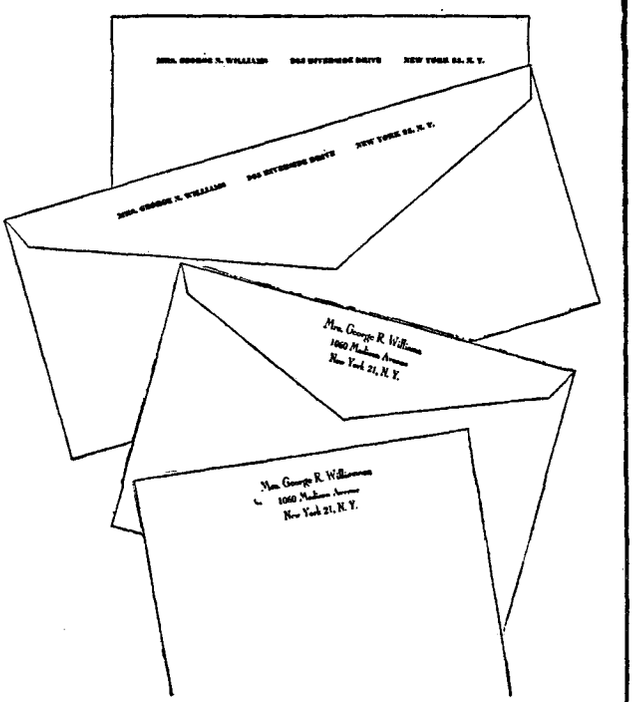

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There is no account of the women whom she trained to succeed her. And there *are* other forms of punctuation possible, and even preferable, to the long dash and the repeated dot: in the first chapter alone, twelve sentences end in the former; in the first fifty pages, no less than sixty-five. Both Virgil and Henry Ghéon used the unfinished half-line, but it is doubtful whether any human being has ever so abused it as Lucille Papin Borden does in this biography.

With the exception, perhaps, of George Henry Lewes, George Eliot's devoted paramour, Alice Miller's husband seems to have been the most modest man in literary history. "Alice had learned," he writes, "and she taught me, how to handle possessions. We avoided . . . one of the great dangers of matrimony. Our home was common property. It was not the wife's special domain. I was at home there too. . . . The first ten years after I left college I had and lost I don't know how many jobs. At a class dinner I made second place for the number of failures so far. It became second nature to me to look at any employment as temporary only. I got expert in jumping before the ship sank, in quitting before the business collapsed or before I got fired." Frances Cabrini, on the other hand, seems to have effaced herself in all her relationships: as Father Martindale writes of her, "Our Lord was never afraid for her. He never had to say to Himself, 'If I allow this dear little nun to succeed in so-and-so she will begin to imagine she is Saint Teresa, the Pope and the President rolled into one.' "

Alice Miller "never used her mind unless there was work for it to do. She never daydreamed." These two women are excellent examples of two extroverts, both with immense executive ability: yet one became that rarest of human phenomena, a saintly person; and the other, a second-rate fiction writer, "that charming Mrs. Miller." That both were able, with only the kind of difficulties that are inherent to the types of life they chose, to achieve their ends, is proof that the nineteenth century has been overwritten as an epoch, par excellence, of female servitude and servility. So far, indeed, the twentieth century has yet to produce its heroines: here we are, half way through it, and where are our Madame Curies, our Florence Nightingales, our Elizabeth Frys, our Frances Cabrinis, our Jane Addamses? Saint Francis de Sales once wrote to a female penitent, "For I will tell you—your sex requires to be guided, and never does it succeed in anything, except by submission." This truth was admirably borne out by the lives of both these women. For the measure of Alice Miller's success was that of her submission—to her own limitations, to her perfect domestic life, to "that state to which it should please God to call her." Frances Cabrini's, obviously, was a life of perfect submission—to her superiors, from her confessor upwards to bishops and the Pope, and always to God her Lord.

The scale of success of these two women was so immeasurably and vastly different: one reached the greatest height humanity can attain; the other was mediocre from start to finish. But neither buried her talent, neither will have to face the staring white napkin that menaces us all. And the difference between them is all the miracle of grace: Alice Miller did a pretty good job on herself; but Frances Cabrini, pray for us.

More Books of the Week

The Yogi and the Commissar and Other Essays. Arthur Koestler. Macmillan. $2.75.

AS MAINE goes, so goes the nation is an old saying, and now we can say as Koestler goes, so goes the intelligentsia of the honest, decent variety. I felt it strongly in his "Arrival and Departure," where his "departure" found its symbolical expression. Now, with this collection it all adds up to a stock-taking of the era 1917-1945. I don't think educators should miss this book. Nor do I think that a priest who has any apostolic urge should shrug it off because of its obvious errors and faults.

In the first place, it is so well written and so full of consuming interest that never for a line did it bore me, even when the author lost himself in speculation. For even his speculation is stimulating.

In the second place, it is the product of a very superior mind, of a man with a pleasantly rich background and of a character of great integrity. No hollowness, no fear. It is sad that Mr. Koestler sees Christianity as a past period of history and the message of Christ as something perfectible. But before we censure him for that attitude, let us ask whose fault it is. Maybe Arthur Koestler judges the tree by the fruit he saw!

Almost a third of the book contains an analysis of the Soviet myth. Mr. Koestler believes apparently that he still is a socialist, or even a Marxist, but he is through with the first attempt to bring the classless society about, commissar fashion. His analysis checks completely with Dallin and other analysts and will be accepted by anybody who is neither a stooge of the resurrected Comintern (*via* Paris) nor one of those dapper businessmen who now appease Russia as they appeased Hitler before. (I am not talking of the necessary cooperation of states for the sake of peace, but of that kind of businessman who tells us that Stalin is the right man for Russia, has cleared up the Bolshevik mess and thinks in our terms.) The most brilliant part of these chapters is Koestler's dramatic analysis of the failure of all socialistic "incentives" for work and their gradual substitution by exactly the same subethical motives which keep capitalism going; above all, profit, hunger and fear, followed by a revival of re-named but old institutions, from officers' epaulets and inheritance laws to the reestablishment of a state church. I recommend reading of these chapters. They will immunize against other secularist panaceas.

Koestler is a rationalist, but a bright one, and honest. As a former member of the European Left, he is less interested in the debunking of Russia phase than the psychological reaction in the extra-Russian Left. He describes the attitude of these men well when he relates what happened to André Malraux at a pink writers' congress, when he asked, after hours of speeches on the glorious new era: "And what about the man who is run over by a street car?" This is a metaphysical question and a very stirring one. Cannibals, Eskimos, Hindus and Christians—all have an answer . . . but the only answer which Malraux, after a painful silence, received was: "In a perfect socialist transportation system, there would be no accidents." Bang!

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On two points I hope Koestler proves to be wrong: his high praise of James Burnham's managerial prophecies, and his belief that the government of Lenin was so beautifully democratic, free and idealistic as compared with Stalin's dictatorship. After all, the Cheka of Lenin was the mother of Stalin's NKVD!

The consequence of my review (and of Koestler's book) may be to add a new instrument to the purely negative orchestra of criticism directed against Russia, and to the hate songs of those who clamor for a crusade; that would be an unmerited fate for this book, because it is on a level far above that of such pamphleteering. The more intelligent reader will see that Koestler is too serious to be listed merely as an anti-communist writer. This becomes evident when we read the whole book, especially its two chapters on the yogi (saint) and the commissar, which serve as overture and finale. Then the chapter on the Soviet myth recedes into focus and becomes what it is intended to be: the outstanding example in our day and during Koestler's own life of the failure of man to solve man's task by the way either of yogi or commissar.

This book defies summarizing for many reasons. The best and clearest sayings cannot be quoted—there are too many unique and brilliant formulations. Who has ever before called Hitler the great crank? Or how can you sum up his exhilarating fun-making of book reviewers in "The Reader's Dilemma" and his masterly debunking of Vercors's "Silence of the Sea" in "The French Flu." He gives me the impression in his last novel that he lives what he preaches in the chapter, "The Novelist's Temptation": the artist is no leader; his mission is not to solve but to expose, not to preach, but to demonstrate.

We may disagree with his attempt to rationalize the world by his "aspect" philosophy, in which he displays an extraordinary power of thought, fearlessness and clearness, a learning that in other men would stifle all creative productivity, but above and behind all this there is a manly searching, a deep respect for the person and an honesty and humility, together with a wit and a sense of proportion which should endear him to all who try to fathom modern man. I wish I knew what Jacques Maritain thinks of this book. H. A. REINHOLD.

The Idea of a Catholic College. John Julian Ryan. Sheed. $2.00.

THE VERY TITLE of Professor Ryan's little book, "The Idea of a Catholic College," is stimulating. Seven centuries after the medieval universities flourished, nearly a century after Cardinal Newman's classic, and in a nation where more than two hundred Catholic colleges are currently enrolling students, we are still pondering the "idea" of a Catholic college. It seems rather funny, but it's healthy. The proper size, curriculum, faculty, administration and financing of a Catholic college are not divinely revealed. Professor Ryan, who has taught at Harvard and now is assistant professor of English at Holy Cross, presents his idea of how it should be done. The fact that his blueprint bears little or no resemblance to existing Catholic colleges is evidence of how flexible the idea is.

The plan is filled with shocking suggestions. The liberal arts enthusiasts will be scandalized to learn that while he has eliminated accounting and ninety-nine other vocational courses, he has substituted gardening, carpentry and lettering. The progressives will recoil from the rigid

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curriculum with no electives and built on two mainsprings, applied theology and applied philosophy. The coaches and not a few others will be disturbed to find that students who enter at fifteen and big time football will go the same path as at Chicago University. The bursars will be horrified at the thought of "no immediate or compulsory tuition fees." Registrars will object to the junking of the present marking system and to a score of other items, pointing out that parents simply would not send their young ones to such a school. Everyone (well, almost) will reject Greek as a required course. And there are probably a number of priests who do not want "to be freed from teaching secular subjects" and have our Catholic college faculties peopled predominantly by laymen.

Professor Ryan anticipated these and similar objections, and he devotes a final chapter to answering them. Convincingly, I think. He asks that his idea be rejected only if the whole plan is "fundamentally and radically wrong." That one loophole is, unfortunately, where he is most vulnerable. The book is charming throughout, filled with good observations about Christian integration, about work and art, about the psychology of student and teacher. But the central thesis is questionable. He states: "The two main courses in the outline of studies here proposed are: practical theology (ascetics); and practical philosophy (technics). All other subjects are to be regarded as purely tributary to one or other of these main courses." From page to page one gets the impression that Professor Ryan's "idea" is a college to train primarily in moral and religious virtue, with skills added as a conscious means to this virtue.

This is a point of view long debated in Catholic history. The early Church Fathers quarrel about it—but philosophy and the classics won the day. Saint Thomas in the thirteenth century had to defend the distinction between intellectual and moral virtues, between the contemplative life and the way of reason. Cardinal Newman began his "Discourses" with the unequivocal statement that the university "is a place of teaching universal knowledge. This implies that its object is . . . intellectual, not moral." It is true, as Newman added, that practically the university needs religion and the Church to give it integrity. But that is quite a different matter. Theology is the queen of the sciences, but not the only science. The contrast is neatly made by comparing Newman's statement with Professor Ryan's preamble, which is: "The principal course, practical theology, is primarily a course of training. It is, first, a form of spiritual inspiration and coaching—a kind of not too strenuous year-long retreat; second, a training in the appreciation of the depth and beauty of Wisdom; third, a course in speculative theology; and fourth, quite incidentally, a course in apologetics."

All this criticism sounds a little pedantic, like a distressed faculty gathering to condemn Professor Ryan's "idea" since it upsets the college catalogue. Maybe it's better to take a specific example. Professor Ryan has included in his four-year curriculum one course in history. It is called "The Papacy and Liberalism." He justifies this: "Since the Papacy is at once the only central body that has weathered all the storms of our history and the earthly head of the Mystical Body, it alone affords a proper object for a truly revealing study of European and American history." That's what happens when you mix intellectual virtue and apostolic zeal

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all in one class. To teach nineteenth century England in terms of the Papacy instead of the industrial revolution and imperialism, or to slant American history in terms of the earthly head of the Mystical Body is to distort the objectiveness that history must have.

It seems to me that what Professor Ryan has proposed is a fine plan for a school of Catholic Action or a school of the lay apostolate. There is truly a need for such institutions, but it would be misleading to call them Catholic colleges. There would be enough similarity, however, so that every Catholic college faculty could profit by reading and discussing this book.

EMERSON HYMES.

The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy. Jacob Burckhardt. 100 illustrations. Phaidon Press (Oxford). $2.50.

THIS latest edition of Burckhardt is an attractive pocket-size volume in the best tradition of the Phaidon Press. The hundred illustrations were chosen by L. Goldscheider, the editor of so many Phaidon publications, who is an expert in using works of art to illustrate social and cultural history, even though not always reliable in their individual attribution.

The great Swiss historian grows larger and more significant with time. "To conceive history as development is to conceive it as history of ideal values, the only ones that have real value," said Croce; and to Burckhardt we owe the maturation of the history of art as a history of ideal values. This book, first published in 1860, is the last portion of a projected series of essays on Western culture from the age of Constantine to the renaissance. It is, of course, a never failing mine of fascinating information on the history, culture, art and people of Italy; but it is also an analysis and interpretation of Western civilization filled with the illuminating intuitions and philosophical overview of a really great mind. For Burckhardt the clear intelligence, the realism, individualism and love of life of the Florentines made this city the center and culmination of the movement. In the twentieth century art historians have grown tired of the renaissance and shifted interest to more mystical periods of art. It is surely not accidental that the reaction against Burckhardt went furthest in Germany, where some historians tried to prove that Florentine art was a purely local development outside the main stream of European culture. Burckhardt, on the contrary, saw in the Florentines men who, living in the midst of chaos as great as that of the fifth century B.C. or the twentieth A.D., achieved a union of the rational humanism of the classic world with the Christian heritage of the middle ages, thus creating a new spirit which was not only the flowering of a historic process but the key to the destiny of Europe.

E. P. RICHARDSON.

The Profane Virtues. Peter Quennell. Viking. $3.00.

IN this volume of brilliant criticism and biography, Peter Quennell writes about Boswell, Gibbon, Sterne and John Wilkes. It is hard to convey the flavor of the book: Mr. Quennell writes with a smoothness and easiness of flow which tend to conceal the fact that he writes extremely well—well in a stylistic sense. His model is obviously that lucid yet constructed clarity which likewise served as model for most English writers in the neoclassic period, but he adds to this a considerable dose of

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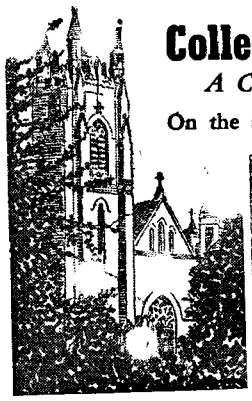

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romantic fondness for the odd and of wit in the use of words. Apart from the quality of his writing, Mr. Quennell possesses considerable psychological insight and hence his appraisals of his characters have freshness and serve to renew our own delight in them. Even if you have read substantial quantities of Boswell or Gibbon or Sterne, as well as critical writings about them, Mr. Quennell will add to what you know and feel about them.

Needless to say, the morals of the eighteenth century were franker and looser than those of the nineteenth, or at least they were franker. Hence there is much in Mr. Quennell's book which could scarcely be described as edifying. And Mr. Quennell develops to the full the thesis that men whose personal lives may be debauched by the carnal vices also embody the profane virtues—if not indeed certain virtues on an even higher level. In a sense his book partly consists of a study of the mystery of sin, and an insistence that here is a mystery, not something which can be dealt with in terms of Sanford and Merton.

H. L. B.

The Cleansing of the Temple. Theodore Wesseling, O.S.B. Longmans. $1.75.

IT IS refreshing to be told, though not for the first time that Lent and Easter have a more far-reaching implication than the spiritual well-being of the individual. Father Wesseling discusses these two themes of Lent and Easter in regard to their social implications: Lent as social purification and Easter as social reconstruction. He is stressing the collective responsibility of Catholic Churchmen as members of the Body of Christ—what he calls the fast of the mind and the fast of the will, in preparation for the great act of sacrifice, which is also the "union of the divine and human." Only by such profound self-sacrifice did Christ accomplish the liberty of the sons of men, as manifested in the Easter gospel; and that is a liberty which "belongs also to the community as such," . . . "to create an integral, perfect, harmonious community of man with man, and man with God." That it will follow that the daily life of the Catholic will be a veritably mystical life: "solitude and public life melt into something simpler which embraces both, that constant communion with Christ." There is a magnificent chapter on the new Encyclical on the Mystical Body of Christ and a final chapter on Christian Unity and Prayer. To read this book is to rejoice anew in the realization that our religion is capable of great things in the midst of today's clamor and uncertainty; that it is a power to purify and energize not only the individual but the whole Body of the Church, and hence the contiguous society which the Church is sent into the world to redeem. An excellent quarry is this book for precious meditations.

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